



Finding Common Ground in the Digital Age
Local media and libraries working together

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Fast Facts about the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association

- Association began in 1925 when the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Association (PNPA) was granted a charter by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The Association functioned under the PNPA name until the late 1990s when its name was shortened to the Pennsylvania Newspaper Association (PNA) to better reflect the fact that the Association provides services and support to all departments of its member newspapers, not just to the publisher.
- In November 2012, the PNA membership voted to change the name of the Association to the Pennsylvania NewsMedia Association. This was done in an effort to better represent our membership and reflect the media companies that many of our members have already become.
- PNA is the official trade organization for all Pennsylvania newspapers and provides representation in the legislature and for educational services, and acts as an information clearinghouse.
- MANSI Media (Mid-Atlantic Newspaper Services, Inc.), the PNA's wholly-owned, for-profit subsidiary, sells classified and display advertising into PNA-member newspapers.
- The PNA Foundation, an independent, non-profit corporation organized as a public foundation, provides PNA members with a wide range of low-cost and innovative training opportunities
- PNA headquarters has been located in Harrisburg, Pa. for most of its eight decades of service. In the 1950s, PNA was the first newspaper trade association of its kind to construct its own headquarters building. The staff worked out of that building until 1998, when growing services and staff size required more space. At that time, the PNA built a state-of-the-art, 24,000-square-foot office building at 3899 North Front Street in Harrisburg. In addition to providing office space for the staff of PNA, MANSI and the PNA Foundation, the building includes training rooms, and multiple board and meeting rooms

The First Amendment

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the **freedom of speech**, or **of the press**; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

The Freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment are grounded in the concepts that:

- Speech and press are means of power through which the people ferret out corruption and discourage tyranny.
- They are also the methods by which the people expresses itself, collectively and individually

Freedom of Speech

How are libraries impacted by the First Amendment?

- U.S. Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan Jr., in *Texas v. Johnson*, said, “If there is a bedrock principle underlying the First Amendment, it is that the Government may not prohibit the expression of an idea simply because society finds the idea itself offensive or disagreeable.”
- As guardians of information available to the public, libraries are often ground zero in battles to determine what type of speech is acceptable.
- Drag Queen story time at Philadelphia Public Library
- Book bans are one of the most common First Amendment issues faced by libraries.
- There are many examples, both legislative and user based, of attempts to ban books based on “unacceptable” content. The American Library Association has a [great list](#). Here are a few highlights:
 - ***1984*, by George Orwell**
 - ***The Catcher in the Rye*, by JD Salinger**
 - ***The Color Purple*, by Alice Walker**
 - ***Harry Potter* series, by J.K. Rowling**
 - ***The Lord of the Rings*, by J.R.R. Tolkien**
 - ***Slaughterhouse Five*, by Kurt Vonnegut**

Freedom of the Press

- The First Amendment protects the publication of truthful information about matters of public concern, like book bans
- Founding Father James Madison said:

The Free Press is the guardian of every other Right under the Constitution.

Madison said that over 200 years ago, but it is equally true today.

If there's no one to bring the book ban to the eyes and ears of the public, the book ban won't be challenged.

Which leads us to the “fake news” epidemic...

“Fake news” is an oxymoron

- News, by definition, is factual and accurate
 - Distinction between news and opinion
- Accurate information and verifiable resources are critical to newsgathering
- Journalists work hard to get the facts right so that their readers are informed
- When the public isn't accurately informed, society suffers:
 - The Founding Fathers recognized that government and society function best when supported by an accurately informed and actively involved citizenry, see First Amendment, FOIA, Sunshine Act, RTKL, Open Courts provisions of US and PA Constitutions, etc.
- Librarians understand and appreciate this need for accuracy
- Verification is a critical tool for journalists trying to get the facts right
 - What are common verification tools (Paula)?

Common Ground

- First Amendment guardians
- Belief that democracy depends on open and equal access to information
- Storytelling
- Research
- Understanding how people find and use information
- Media literacy
- Finding and cultivating trusted sources
- Civic engagement
- Doing more with less
 - “Libraries and news organizations tend to have a lot in common — they provide information, they’re a vital community resource and both institutions are in the process of reinventing themselves.”

Doing more with less

- Libraries and local media have faced steep cuts to resources in recent years
- Both asked to do more with fewer resources
- Libraries report that demand for local news, both print and digital, is high
- Cambridge, Mass Study,
https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/newspapers/Geneva_2014/s6-pacy-en.pdf
 - Results of the study showed that the high usage of newspapers depends on many factors; most prominently, however, is that free and universal access to both print and digital versions encourages patrons to read and research. It is important to note that free access to news is predicated on public library services not being reduced. Findings from this case study reveal that newspaper use in public libraries may not be in decline but rather may be increasing in the digital age, contradicting assumptions about how newspapers are consumed.

How can libraries help local media and vice versa?

- Archiving assistance

- Archiving in the digital age can be tricky, and librarians have great skill in resource management
- The Wayback Machine is a nice tool, but it's not an actual archive
- Library of Congress has recommendations for newspaper archival; replicate at the local level
<https://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/newspap.html>

- Hosting events for government, media and the public

- Getting folks into the library is important
- Media partners can spread the word before the event and provide coverage afterward

- Spread the word

- Local media can help you with patron engagement and illustrating relevance

- Resource Identification

- Journalists (like the public) can be unaware of your resources like:
 - inter-library system loans,
 - information about state and federal library resources,
 - digital resources, like subscription-based services,
 - historical resources about your community,

Working together

- Journalists, your local librarian is a powerful ally, *Local News Lab*
<https://localnewslab.org/2017/10/19/journalists-your-local-librarian-is-a-powerful-ally/>
- Want to bring in younger audiences? Partner with your local library, *Poynter*
<https://www.poynter.org/tech-tools/2017/want-to-bring-in-younger-audiences-partner-with-your-local-library/>
 - Collaboration between The Dallas Morning News and the Dallas Public Library. The goal of the program is to turn high school students into budding community journalists, while also helping them realize the importance of local news organizations *and* libraries at the same time.

Working together, cont'd

- At the University of Missouri, the UM Libraries and Reynolds Journalism Institute are exploring ways to preserve digital content through the [Journalism Digital News Archive](#).
- Around the country, a number of [librarians write columns](#) for their local papers.
- In Kansas City, Missouri, librarians are lending their expertise to help citizens learn more about their own locale—and about how they can track down such information themselves—through an ongoing partnership between the Kansas City Public Library and The Kansas City Star. [Launched last October](#), a project called [“What’s Your KCQ?”](#) invites locals to submit questions about their city that journalists and librarians will investigate and then, on the Star’s website, share their answers with the public.
- Journalists from many sites, including [The Lens](#) in New Orleans and the [Kentucky Center for Investigative Reporting](#), have gone to libraries to show how to obtain public records or determine if a “news story” is legitimate.

Working together, cont'd

- A fact-checking program developed with journalists, [Checkology](#), is being rolled out to libraries to help students distinguish fact from fiction.
- “Java with Journalists,” where Kansas City Star journalists would hold listening sessions, complete with coffee and doughnuts, at several branches of the library system to ask readers in different neighborhoods, “What do you want us to cover? What stories are we missing?” <https://www.kansascity.com/news/your-kcq/article220880145.html>
- Spaceship Media partnered with librarians when working on [The Many](#), a [dialogue journalism](#) project that connected hundreds of women, from different backgrounds and political leanings, to discuss political and social issues in closed Facebook groups.
 - The Many Facebook groups provided a jumping-off point for stories by Spaceship’s local media partners, including news outlets of different sizes and mediums in Alabama, Louisiana, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Ohio, and Michigan
 - Librarians were used as sources for facts, capitalizing on their trusted relationship with the community

Get the ball rolling

- Visit your local newsroom and reach out to local journalists about the topics and examples we've discussed today
 - Lunch and learn, & make it a mutually beneficial outing
- Follow and interact with your local journalists on their website and social media accounts
 - Helps you keep an eye on the community you serve
 - Can highlight common interest areas
 - Drives traffic to both institutions
- Write a column for your local newspaper
 - Get your issues in front of the community